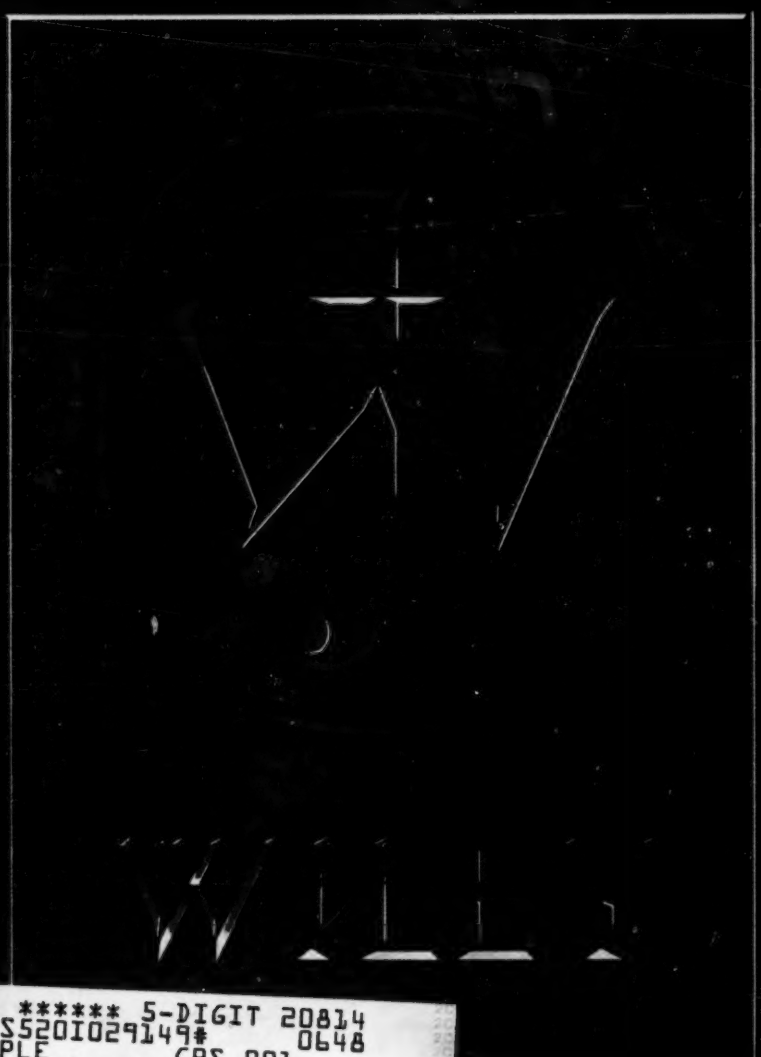
C1852-2

Religious Books in Secular Stores: A Special Survey
Looking Forward to CBA • New Directions in Religious Distribution
A/V: A Good Time at ABA • A Century for Agatha Christie

Publishers Weekly®

A CAHNERS/R.R. BOWKER PUBLICATION *THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS MAGAZINE OF BOOK PUBLISHING* JULY 6, 1990 $2.50

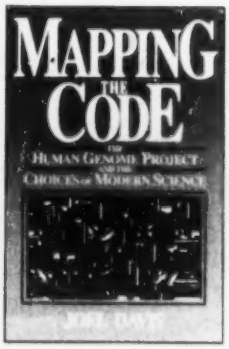


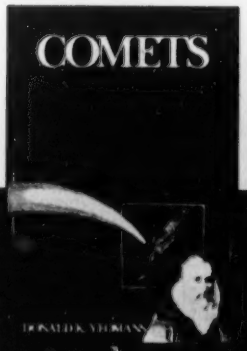
#222J ***** 5-DIGIT 20814
#CNG9ES52OIO29149# 0648
PW SAMPLE CPS 001
CONGRESSIONL INFO SRV INC
STATISTICAL REFERENCE INX
4520 EASY-WEST HWY 800
BETHESDA, MD 20814

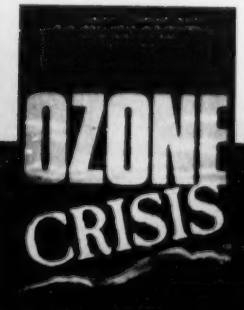
Redefining a Grand Tradition

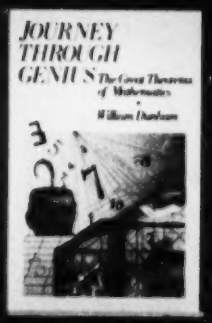
Expanding

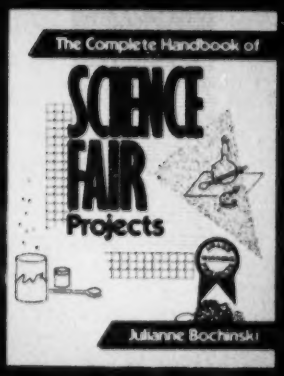
NATURE & SCIENCE



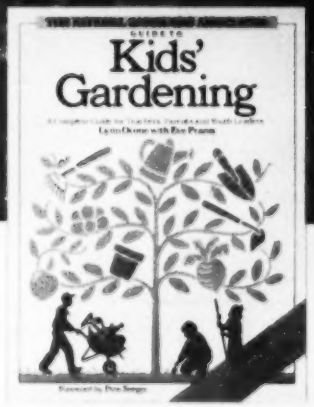


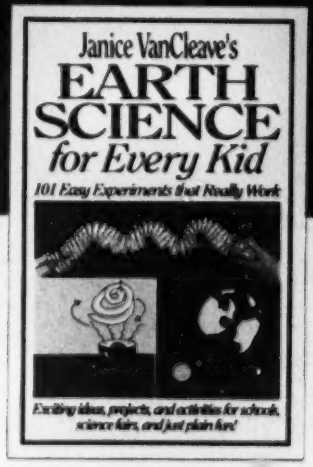






YOUNG ADULT




Janice VanCleave's
EARTH SCIENCE
for Every Kid
101 Easy Experiments That Really Work
Exciting ideas, projects, and activities for school, science fairs, and just plain fun!

Publishers Weekly is published weekly by Bowker Magazine Group, The Cahners Publishing Co., a Division of Reed Publishing USA, 275 Washington St., Newton MA 02158-1630. Terrence M. McDermott, President; Robert T. Brawn, Sr. Vice President/General Manager; Jerry D. Neth, Sr. Vice President/Publishing Operations; J. J. Walsh, Sr. Vice President/Finance; Thomas J. Dellamaria, Sr. Vice President/Production & Manufacturing; Ralph Knupp, Vice President/Human Resources. Bowker Magazine Group is also an affiliate of R. R. Bowker Co., Gordon Graham, Chairman of the Board; Ira Siegel, President. Copyright © 1990 by Reed Publishing USA; Chairman; Ronald G. Segel, Chairman and CEO; Robert L. Krakoff, President and COO; William M. Platt, Sr. Vice President. Printed in the U.S.A. SUBSCRIPTION: U.S.A.: 1 year $119, 2 years $199, 3 years $279. Canada: 1 year $177, 2 years $301, 3 years $425. Air delivery to all other countries: 1 year $260, 2 years $442, 3 years $624. (Remit in U.S. funds only.) PUBLICATION ADDRESS: Publishers Weekly, P.O. Box 1979, Marion, OH 43302. *Address editorial and advertising correspondence to* 249 West 17th Street, New York, NY 10011; telephone: 212/645-0067; telex: 12-7703; fax: 212/645-5409. *Address circulation correspondence and changes of address to* Publishers Weekly, P.O. Box 1979, Marion, OH 43302; telephone 1-800-842-1669; in Alaska, Hawaii, Canada, and all other countries, telephone: 614-382-3322. ISSN 0000-0019. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Publishers Weekly*, P.O. Box 1979, Marion, OH 43302. Cahners Publishing Company, a Division of Reed Publishing USA ☐ Specialized Business Magazines for Building & Construction, Research, Technology, Electronics, Computing, Printing, Publishing, Health Care, Foodservice, Packaging, Environmental Engineering, Manufacturing, Entertainment, Home Furnishings, and Interior Design. ☐ Specialized Consumer Magazines for Child Care, Boating, and Wedding Planning.

Publishers Weekly

VOLUME 237 NUMBER 27 | *THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS MAGAZINE OF BOOK PUBLISHING* | JULY 6, 1990

ISSN 0000-0019

PUBLISHER
George W. Slowik Jr.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
John F. Baker

EXECUTIVE EDITOR
Daisy Maryles

MANAGING EDITOR
Michael Coffey
Robin Lenz, *Assistant Managing Editor*

NEWS
Madalynne Reuter, *Editor*
Calvin Reid, *Associate Editor*

TRADE NEWS
Gayle Feldman, *Editor*
Maria Simson, *Associate Editor*

BOOKSELLING
John Mutter, *Editor*
Maureen J. O'Brien, *Associate Editor*

CHILDREN'S BOOKS
Diane Roback, *Editor*

FORECASTS & NONFICTION FORECASTS
Genevieve Stuttaford, *Editor*
Molly McQuade, *Associate Editor & How-to*
Olivier David, *Editorial Assistant*

FICTION FORECASTS & INTERVIEWS
Sybil Steinberg, *Editor*

PAPERBACKS FORECASTS
Penny Kaganoff, *Editor*

ART DIRECTOR
Karen E. Jones

RESEARCH LIBRARIAN
Miriam Phelps

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT
Isabell L. Taylor

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Carolyn T. Anthony, Joseph Barbato, Dulcy Brainard, Robert A. Carter, Leonore Fleischer, Jerome P. Frank, Chris Goodrich, Chandler B. Grannis, William Griffin, Margaret Jones, Beth Levine, Jean F. Mercier, Paul S. Nathan, Allene Symons, Joanne Tangorra, Thomas Weyr, John Zinsser

U.S. CORRESPONDENTS
Howard Fields (Washington)
Lisa See (Los Angeles)
Bob Summer (Southeast)
Tim Unsworth (Midwest)

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS
Herbert R. Lottman (International)
Vivienne Menkes (London)
Beverley Slopen (Toronto)
Sally Taylor (Far East)

DIRECTOR OF ART DEPARTMENT
Barrie Stern

EDITORIAL PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR
Nancy Brown

SENIOR PRODUCTION EDITOR
Susan Caputo

PRODUCTION EDITORS
Theodore Attles, Cheryl Brown, Darcel Church, Lori Shor, Suzanne White, Ann Yazejian

EDITORIAL INQUIRIES: *(212) 463-6758*

DIRECTOR, ADVERTISING SALES
Alan Schlanger *(212) 463-6825*

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Marina Paruolo *(212) 463-6567*

ADVERTISING PRODUCTION ASSISTANT
Nancy Campoli *(212) 463-6558*

ADVERTISING CONTRACTS COORDINATOR
Lorna Campbell *(212) 463-6604*
For complete listing of sales offices see Weekly Exchange section.

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR
Joan Roman

CIRCULATION MANAGER
Christine Duffy

The Audit Bureau

SUBSCRIPTION INQUIRIES: *(800) 842-1669*

FEATURES

Onward and Upward 16
Religious publishers aim high at CBA after a warm ABA welcome
By William Griffin

Sagacious, Congenial, Aggressive 22
Spring Arbor's new and traditional services point toward continued success
By Daisy Maryles

A PW Cahners Survey
Religious Titles in the Secular Store 25
Data show stronger acceptance but a need for more guidance

DEPARTMENTS

NEWS OF THE WEEK 10

High Court Puts Limits On Libel Law 'Opinion'
64% of David & Charles Holders Agree to Reader's Digest Takeover
Walden Claims One Million-Plus In 'Preferred Reader' Program
Facts on File No Longer For Sale; Heads Fired
NEA Bill Goes to House Floor, Auguring Fierce Debate
Quinlin Buys Majority Share in Peachtree, Becomes President
Richard Marek and Joyce Engelson Join Crown
Allan Marshall Leaves ABA
Macmillan Acquires 51% of Israel's Keter Publishing
Large Firms Can Become 'Dinosaurs,' Dystel Warns
Obituary Notes: Jocelyn D. Kahn, Yosef Naine Dorman

TRADE NEWS 27

Agatha Christie Centenary: Entertaining All the Way
To the Bank
Kisses and Counterculture: New Books from Citadel

BOOK DESIGN & MANUFACTURING..... 32

How Dell Combines Fresh, Competitive Cover Ideas with Production Economies

BOOKSELLING..... 40

Just Books, Just Thriving: This tiny Greenwich, Conn., store sells to some of the country's wealthiest corporations

AUDIO/VIDEO PLUS 43

Audio and Video at the ABA: The show proves a good bet for publishers and booksellers
Audio Reviews

PW INTERVIEWS..... 51

Mary Wesley

FORECASTS..... 53
Nonfiction 53
Fiction 57
Paperbacks 62

COLUMNS

Highlights 7
Letters 8
Calendar 8
Rights 48
Talk of the Trade 49
International Front 50
Weekly Exchange 65
Paperback Bestsellers 70
Hardcover Bestsellers 72

Publishers Weekly reserves the right to make its own independent judgment as to the acceptability of advertising copy and illustrations in advertisements. Advertiser and advertising agency assume liability for all content (including text, representation and illustrations) of advertisements printed and also assume responsibility for any claims arising therefrom against the publisher. Offers to sell products that appear in *Publishers Weekly* are subject to all laws and regulations and are void where so prohibited.

PRE CBA

A PW CAHNERS SURVEY

Religious Titles in the Secular Store

Data Show Stronger Acceptance But a Need for More Guidance

BY WILLIAM GRIFFIN

The good news, according to the results of a special survey conducted by *PW*/Cahners on the religious book market, is that almost three-quarters of the general book community does stock and sell religious books, and some are planning to expand the category. Many other data, noted below and in the accompanying charts, range from the commonplace to the astounding.

Of the 295 booksellers who responded to the survey mailed on May 11 to 1000 *PW* subscribers, 71.5% carried religious books. The rest noted that they did not because they were a specialty store (54.8%), there was no demand (20.2%) or there was not enough space (10.7%). *PW*'s findings are the result of a base of the 211 respondents who have religious stock in their stores.

What kind of bookstores make up the 211? Nearly half—43.7%—were general independent bookstores; 18.3% were specialty independent stores; 11.5%, college/university bookstores; and 16.3% were national and regional chains. Their average revenues in 1989 were $1,040,000.

The average revenue from the sale of religious books in 1989 was $27,245. Bibles accounted for the largest part of the sales (23%), followed by inspiration (19%), New Age (15%) and motivation (11%).

The average number of religious titles carried was 236, although a little over a third had less than 75 on their shelves. About 25% plan to increase their religious book inventories in 1991. Average space allocated to religious books was 8.7% of total space.

More than half the stores surveyed put the titles in the "Religious" section, and less than 25% separate titles according to religious affiliation.

Bible Queries

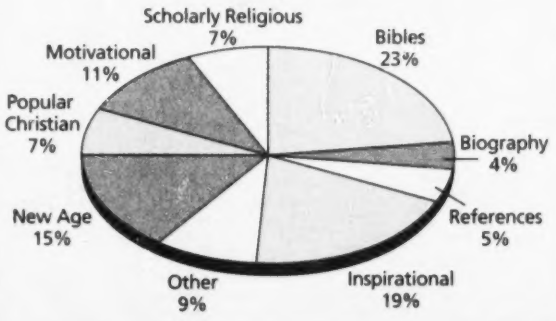
Scripture held sacred by a faith or a denomination was the most popular type of religious book kept in stock, with Protestant Bibles occupying 60% of the inventory; Catholic Bibles, 24%; and Jewish, 6%. "The shoplifting problem with Bibles has increased 500% in the last six months," confessed one disconsolate bookseller, reluctant to choose the Renaissance solution to pilferage: chaining the Bibles to tables or walls.

As to which Bible to stock, most general bookstores didn't seem to know their Apocalypse from their Zachariah. The various versions and manifold bindings had produced only confusion. For many managers, this has been excuse enough for not carrying the troublesome title in the first place. For others, help could be a telephone call away, if only they knew the number (distributors like Spring Arbor and Riverside do have Bible hotlines).

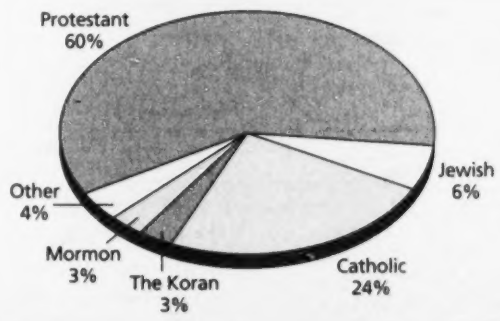
What Booksellers Look For

Of the respondents, 86.3% were involved in the purchase of religious titles. Subject matter and author's reputation were still ranked as the most important considerations when ordering new titles, followed by price. Customers' requests

Percentage Breakdown of Bookstore Sales of Religious Books



Percentage Breakdown of Bibles Carried in Terms of Religious Denomination



PRE CBA

(79.1%) and publishers' catalogues (48.8%) still ranked as the most important sources for information on religious titles, followed by reviews and articles in trade journals (43.1% and 42.4%, respectively).

While 61% of the respondents said publishers' sales reps visit or call on them, only 35% of this group seemed to be impressed by their sales reps' knowledge about religious product.

Publishers won by a nose over wholesalers/distributors when it came to who got the majority of orders. Of the 49.8% of the wholesalers/distributors, Ingram got 83.9% of the business; Baker & Taylor, 57.1%; Riverside Book & Bible, 18.5%; and Spring Arbor, 17.6%. Clearly, general bookstores get their religious books and Bibles from the distributors they deal with for the rest of their stock.

Best of the Class

With regard to publishers' reputations with the responding stores, the most popular were, in descending order, Zondervan, Harper San Francisco, Nelson, Abingdon and Tyndale.

With regard to caliber of sales reps, customer service, return policy, product quality and advertising/promotion, Harper San Francisco won the day, followed closely by Nelson and Zondervan.

Most of the booksellers responded to the question "What can religious publishers do to help you sell their books?" with the usual litany—more advertising, more in-store promotion, more personal contact with sales reps, larger discounts, full-credit returns, etc.

But these responses also revealed that religious publishers may have to change strategies if they want their books to cross over from religious to general bookstores.

"Print quality books and skip the fluff," was one response, and it sounded both simple and profound. But, of course, it was neither. What might be a fluffy book to one reader might indeed be a quality book to another reader. Which is another way of saying that each segment of a market will get its books only if it makes itself known.

"Update to reflect present-day issues in conflict with traditional 'religious' thought," was how another bookseller responded. Which was another way of saying that religion seems outdated, and that religious publishers should modernize their product so that it would sell better. But the nature of religion has always been such that it has had its greatest appeal when it was at its most static, most traditional, most orthodox. Hence, updating to sell more may be an illusion.

"Publish books with gay and lesbian authors/themes," was another reply . . . which was another way of saying that religious publishers should publish books with a new and positive, rather than a traditional and negative, point of view on homosexuality.

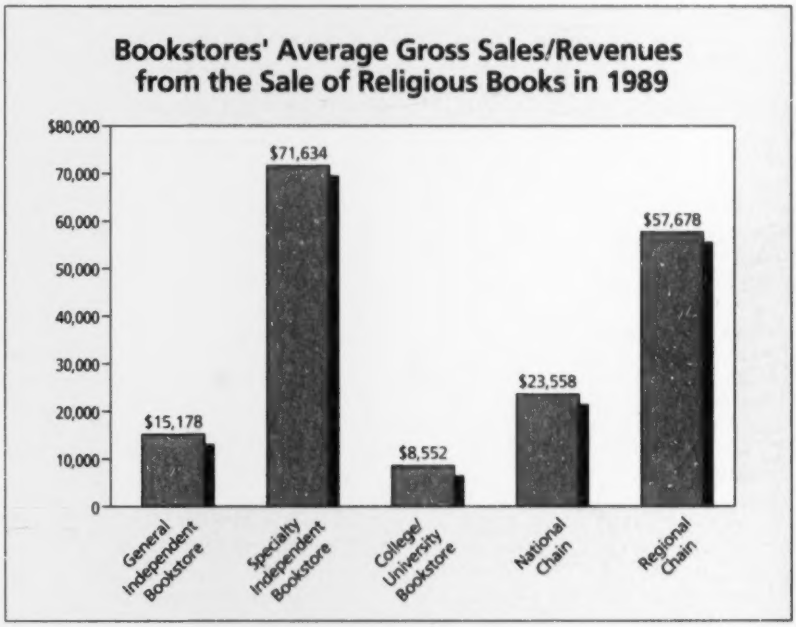
Religious publishers—that is to say, purveyors of Christianity in book form—continued to express both surprise and dismay when they discovered that, in the limited shelf space, often bumping the Christian product, are what one general bookstore has listed as "post-Christian, comparable religion, Native American, goddess, mythology, science and philosophy."

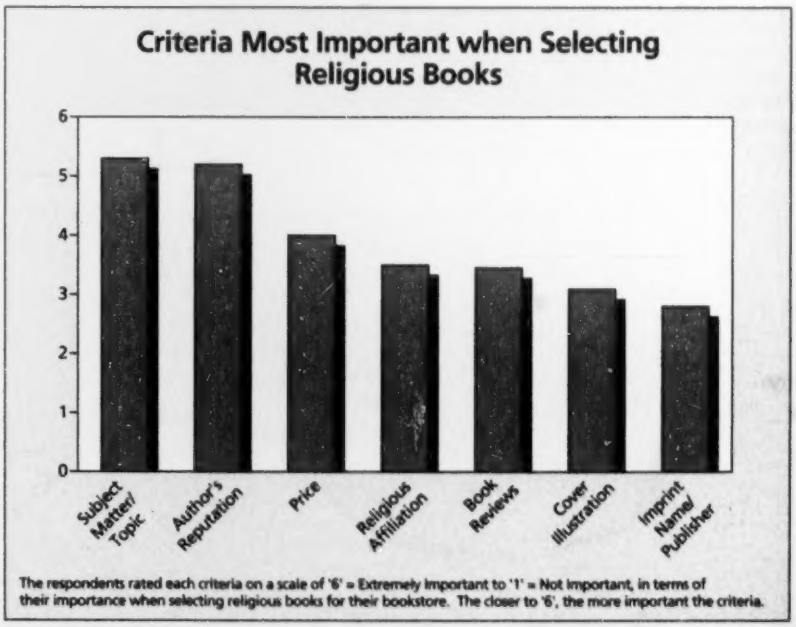
Of all the subgenres in religious publishing, only fiction seemed to need no passport in going from one market to another.

"No general bookstore," lachrymosed one Moses from the religious retailing desert, "can fill all the religious customers' needs."

Vice versa.

Amen. □





The respondents rated each criteria on a scale of '6' = Extremely Important to '1' = Not Important, in terms of their importance when selecting religious books for their bookstore. The closer to '6', the more important the criteria.